

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-08 TRSE-00 /088 W  
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R 092359Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9820  
INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 1109

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, SN, KN  
SUBJECT: SINGAPORE VISIT OF NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION

REF: SINGAPORE 1016

1. DESPITE SINGAPOREAN RELUCTANCE TO RECEIVE A VISIT FROM A NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION HEADED BY VICE PREMIER AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, KONG JIN TAE, THE SEVEN-MAN DELEGATION ARRIVED IN SINGAPORE ON MARCH 6 FOR A THREE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT. REPORTEDLY THE HIGHEST-RANKING DPKR OFFICIAL TO VISIT SINGAPORE IN TEN YEARS, KONG MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM (WHO ALSO HOSTED DINNER FOR DELEGATION), AND FINANCE MINISTER HON SUI SEN. (SINGAPORE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER GOH KENG SWEE HAS BEEN ON VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND.)

2. DELEGATION'S SCHEDULE INCLUDED VISITS TO TOURIST ATTRACTIONS, SUCH AS HARBOR TOUR AND SENOOSA ISLAND, AS WELL AS TOUR OF JURONG INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, JURONG SHIPYARD AND SINGAPORE IRON  
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AND STEEL MILLS. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, KONG ALSO MET MANAGING DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT TRADING CORPORATION INTRACO, CHANDRA DAS, FOR "GENERAL TRADE DISCUSSION" AND TO INVITE INTRACO TO "SEND A TRADE DELEGATION TO NORTH KOREA."

3. ACCORDING TO STRAITS TIMES, PRIMARY PURPOSE OF KONG'S VISIT WAS TO EXPAND TRADE. ALTHOUGH SINGAPORE'S EXPORTS TO NORTH KOREA

INCREASED BY ABOUT \$7.8 MILLION TO \$23.5 MILLION IN 1977,  
IMPORTS FROM NORTH KOREA DECLINED FROM \$27.2 MILLION  
IN 1976 TO \$16.8 MILLION IN 1977 (ALL FIGURES JANUARY-NOVEMBER).  
COMPOSITION OF SINGAPORE EXPORTS REPORTED AS RUBBER PLASTICS,  
AND TEXTILES; IMPORTS CORN, IRON AND STEEL INGOTS, ZINC AND  
FISH. NEW NATION REPORTED THAT KONG EXPRESSED HOPE FOR  
DOUBLING OF TRADE BETWEEN DPRK AND SINGAPORE AS KOREAN PRO-  
DUCTION DOUBLED BY THE END OF THE CURRENT SEVEN-YEAR PLAN IN 1984.

4. PRESS COVERAGE, ALTHOUGH QUITE DETAILED ON CONTENTS  
OF SCHEDULE, HAS BEEN LOW-KEY, WITH RATHER BRIEF STORIES  
APPEARING ON INSIDE PAGES OF STRAITS TIMES AND NEW NATION.  
STRAITS TIMES QUOTED PORTIONS OF PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY  
KONG SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVAL WHICH NOTED SUCCESS OF SINGAPORE UNDER  
LEADERSHIP OF LEE KUAN YEW IN STRUGGLE FOR CONSOLIDATION OF  
NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND DEVELOPMENT; COMMENTED THAT NORTH  
KOREA UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT KIM II SUNG HAD SUCCESSFULLY  
BEGUN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS SECOND SEVEN-YEAR DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN; AND ASSERTED THAT THE DELEGATION'S VISIT WOULD BE  
"CONDUCTIVE TO THE STRENGTHENING OF THE RELATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP  
AND COOPERATION FORGED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND THE  
FRIENDSHIP AND SOLIDARITY OF THE PEOPLE OF ASIA AND THE THIRD  
WORLD COUNTRIES."

5. CONTRADICTORY STORIES ABOUT DELEGATION'S MOVEMENTS IN MARCH  
5 STRAITS TIMES -- A REPORT FROM KUALA LUMPUR AT CONCLUSION  
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OF DELEGATION'S VISIT TO MALAYSIA THAT IT WAS RETURNING TO PYONGYANG  
AND AN AFP REPORT OF ITS EXPECTED ARRIVAL IN SINGAPORE ON MARCH 6 --  
ARE INDICATIVE OF LAST-MINUTE NATURE OF ARRANGEMENTS NECESSITATED  
BY GOS ATTEMPT TO DISCOURAGE VISIT.  
HOLDRIDGE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PLANNING MEETINGS, MINISTERIAL VISITS  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
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